

YOUTHSHADES

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OCTOBER, 2017

CRIME



When Relationships Go Bad | 7 Things To Do At 21 | Rape is not Bae
Poems about crime | And more...

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ABOUT YOUTH SHADES

Youth Shades is an online international magazine, which explores sociocultural issues through spheres of literary genres such as fiction (poetry and stories), non-fiction (essays, opinion pieces/articles and memoirs and reviews), Arts and Skills.

In our Arts & Skills segment, we feature works in the trend of Visual Arts - paintings, abstract illustrations, drawings, cartoons - which reflect societal colourations of cultures, people and places. Also celebrated in this sect are exhibitions of creativities, especially those with diversities creatively put together. By creativity, we mean skills including Makeovers, Fashion Designs, and Photography.

80% of the target audiences are the youths; such is expedient owing to the observed rapid derailing exuberance among that sect of persons. Youth Shades Magazine is therefore aimed at exposing and condemning societal ills while attempting to curb such on the one hand, and on the other hand, celebrating virtues against vices. Another objective of Youth Shades Magazine is to bridge geographical gaps between continents.

The Magazine is a platform for established, up-and-coming writers and artists to display their talents. We love to publish original content that have never been published elsewhere.

Daily submissions are hereby welcomed from gifted hands in the above genres. **Inclusion of contact and links of the artists to the works submitted amounts to advert, which shall attract advert charges upon confirmation from the submitter.** Please, note that the acceptance of any submission is based on credibility, social relevance, public health and originality of the submissions. By submitting to us, the submitter has agreed to our terms of being published without a pay from us, having the platform as one for self-exhibition, contribution to art and promotion.

Youth Shades,

Righting wry things...

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Call for Submission

November 2017 Issue

For its November 2017 Issue, Youth Shades Online magazine calls for submission from ardent writers in the following categories:

POETRY

This category is for **Nigerians ONLY**.

- Email **ONE** poem on the theme – **DISABILITY** to *info@youthshades.com*
- Include the theme, your poem's title and your name in the subject of the email. *For example:* Passion, This is my Passion, John Osas.
- You can write the poem in the body of the email or attach it as a Microsoft Word Document (.doc)
- Your Poem should not be longer than 14 lines.
- Your poem should be original and never published elsewhere.
- Alongside your poem, send us your bio stating the following:

1. Tell us about yourself
2. What prompted you to begin writing poetry?
3. What conditions help you with your writing process?
4. Why do you think poetry is important?
5. Who is your favorite poet and why?

FICTION

Anyone can send an entry for this category irrespective of nationality.

- Email one story to *info@youthshades.com*
- Your story should be less than 1,500 words.
- Your story can be on any social or cultural theme.

- Include the title of your story, your country and your name in the subject of the email.
- You can write the story in the body of the email or attach it as a Microsoft Word Document (.doc)
- Your story should be original and never published elsewhere.
- Alongside your story, send us your bio of less than 50 words.

CREATIVE NON-FICTION

Anyone can send an entry for this category irrespective of nationality.

- Same submission guidelines as stated under the FICTION category above.

ARTICLES

Anyone can send an entry for this category irrespective of nationality.

- Email one article on lifestyle topics such as health, beauty, fitness, food & drinks, diet, culture, business, environment, inspiration, relationships, education, fashion, etc to info@youthshades.com
- Same submission guidelines as stated under the FICTION category above.

ARTS & SKILLS

Anyone can send an entry for this category irrespective of nationality.

- Paintings, abstract illustrations, drawings, cartoons, makeovers, fashion designs, photography, etc are to be included in this publication. Artists can email their creative works (less than 3), sending them as attachments to info@youthshades.com
- Include your name and country in subject of the email.
- Alongside your creative works, send us your bio of less than 50 words.

THERE ARE NO PRIZES FOR OTHER CATEGORIES, EXCEPT POETRY;
Youth Shades will only promote works of artists and other writers.

Why you should submit to us:

- Your work gets published and exposed to an international audience as we have readers across several continents including Africa, Asia, South America and Europe.
- ALL entries will be promoted on our website – <http://www.youthshades.com> continuously for two (2) months.
- You can submit to us as frequently as you want.
- Contributors receive free copies of our issues.
- and other benefits.

DO NOT INDULGE IN PLAGIARISM; SUCH WORKS WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED.

Only works that follow the submission guidelines will be accepted, compiled and published. In a bid to encourage winners of our Poetry Contest, we sell our issues across online stores at an affordable price, so we can appreciate the winners with cash awards and other gifts.

Why you should partake in the Poetry Contest

- * The winner of the Poetry Contest bags \$10 and we will publish his/her bio.
- * The winner, 2nd and 3rd runner-ups receive certificates of participation.
- *The winning poem gets reviewed free of charge.
- * You can submit different poems every month on different competition themes; this means you can partake in the competition as often as you want and increase your chances of winning.
- * ... and other benefits

Submission deadline is 31st October, 2017

Kindly note that no parts of works published in our issues should be copied by contributors or readers and distributed without the written consent of Youth Shades. **Links of our issues can be shared so that people get to buy and read the content.**



WINNING PIECE:

THE DEVIL'S PUSH by David Adedokun

A projectile of thundering echoes from the depth of hell,

Beamed as voltaic momentum through the narrow path of the nerves,

The impulse coursing through the numerous tunnels of the brain,

And a battle ground flared up in the mind.

Lights dim and darkness filled up to the brim,

Spilling gradually to every corner of the body;

The heart gets infiltrated turning from crimson to charcoal,

Through the veins, the red salty fluid turned dark vinegar.

The lungs get aerated with the vaporized evil from the core temperature,

Clear oxygen contaminated and every bit of good about to be suffocated.

All five senses in accordance ready to elicit,

Wicked desires of the monstrous demons about to be fulfilled,

It could be any of; kill, steal, cheat, rape, loot or more,

The command is 'commit a sin, create a crime scene'.

JUDGE'S NOTE

The poet makes use of descriptive language to bring to limelight the various vices prevalent in our society and among the teeming populace. The images of force, chaos are created with cacophonous words like "projectile", "thundering echoes", "and voltaic momentum".

The poem gives us a step by step analysis and explanation of the inner workings of a heart filled with or gearing towards evil. All five senses become numbed with larceny, treachery and other aforementioned vices in the poem.

The poem is power packed as it appeals to our emotions: arousing our moral consciousness. It educates the masses on the stifling impact of crime on the larger populace.

The organization and presentation is superb as the poet consciously strive to present a pleasant symmetry. Worthy of note is the poem's stamped mark of originality. The poem is natural, free flowing and appears effortlessly crafted though expertise as a result of diligence can't be overlooked as the key.

1ST RUNNER UP:

LUSTFUL HEIST by Emmine Paradox

We burn down buildings, like we find remembrance in embers,
We forget our bodies are burning cities, seething
With a raging inferno, born by lustful desires.

How did the first man know he can harvest pleasures
Amongst the clouds sprawled on a woman's skin?
Lustful desires are rivers of water, strutting gleefully
On our bodies like butter, glistening on a fresh crusty bread.

Abiké was oblivious her body could douse the flames
Of lustful desires, burning in the bodies of many mean men;
Her budding body was yet to understand the tongue of misery.

Like the Nile, her juvenile tears flowed down her cheeks,
As these 'high-men' broke through her hymen;
Paddling their canoe through the valley between her thighs:
A ripple of pain and trickle of blood...tragedy!

JUDGE'S NOTE

The title is appropriate and captivating. The poem highlights the physical, emotional and psychological effect of sexual abuse on a naive young girl by "the high-men." The poem is laced with metaphors, similes and vivid images of plunder and desecration. To the girl child, the lessons of chastity and self discipline are pointed out. The message is clear but the organization is quite below mark. The poet's choices of words are explicit to convey the subject matter. The poem appeals to the reader's sensuality and the overall effect is nauseous

2ND RUNNER-UP

Fingers Are Not Equal by Whyte Daniel

Here I am, here I am, being cradled under the

under the comfort of our weary roof

Here I am, here I am, being lulled by the rhythm of the

the rhythm of the intruding tears
tearing in showering me with arrows of hope
hope that begets comforting whelming streams
Fingers are not equal is the motto
the motto of our antagonists
our antagonists who slither like puffadders
like puffadders to the helms devouring with all ten-fingers
with all ten-fingers dashing out farts
dashing out farts, farts, as our share of the national cake
Here I am, here I am, being soothed by their malodorous mess
Here, here I am, here I am

JUDGE'S NOTE

Though the title is a cliché, the poem presents the persona's fear and trepidation in the face of exploitation and inequality. This is shown in the poet's choice of broken thoughts. He calls the perpetrators of this evil act "our antagonist". The language of the poem is embellished as it explores the struggle for survival by the persona and his people- hence the use of "our...". "Our antagonist" are the devourers, channeling public fund "...national cake" for personal aggrandizement. Vivid images of disorder and impunity are being transported by words like " antagonist", "puff adders", "devouring", "farts", and "Malodorous mess". The line "dashing out farts, farts..." establishes the alliteration sounds. It spurs the angry and discontented mood, as with impunity, the dignity of the persona is being trampled on. The poem ends on a note of sarcasm, despair and disillusionment.

The poet's choices of words are appropriate for his readers. The form, flow and organization is remarkable. Nevertheless, clichés make a piece all too telling. A

vocabulary increase will help avoid such expressions as "national cake" and "fingers are not equal".

OUR JUDGE, Owunna Esther Oluchi is a graduate of English Studies from University of Port Harcourt. Dedication and discipline are her strong watch words. She loves reading, travelling, cooking and striving to be a better person. *Remember, defeat is a detour, not a dead end.* So, keep pushing and one day you will tell your **BIG STORY**.

PRESSURE, PLEASURE AND PAIN by SAMUEL O. OGUNYINKA

No treasure she had, only the flower; her pride
Till she walked, majestically like an unveiled bride,
Into the flamy farm of noonworlds'- those minds of pistol
Abducted to the desert of breaths, where no ear could hark her whistle.

Trouble, hustle, struggle, grumble, tumble- back down
All strength spent in striving couldn't secure her gown,
Rather succumbed to the forceful sensuality to give a soft yell
For yesterday has become a story to tell.

Life claiming was the battle of one against four
A pure agony that pleaded her looming breath fall,
As she watches the pool of blood, flushing the withered flower she had kept;
Bitterly, she shed and heaven wept.

Crime by Adediran Omotara

Crime, wanted!
You blame me endlessly, without looking closely
Father raped me at will
If I told anyone then my flight to the grave will be booked
Mother watched like a toothless lioness
I fell in love
It made me forget my miseries
I became addicted
My love for drugs popped my shoulders high
And refused to be molested
Father tried so hard but I booked his flight, a journey of no return
Blame me no more
For sanity is far from me
@ Adediran Omotara

Crime by Sudha Dixit

I am behind bars, for what crime - I know not
The jumble of phraseology I must rummage,
Didn't find any term in the legal jargon,
Actually, I am the prisoner of my own image

Traditions and rituals played the cops
The web of piety set the stage
Emotional blackmail made me the prey
Deified, I am virtually in a cage

To err is human but I have no right to err
For I am in the holy book's page,
Compelled to be divine, unseen and untouched

Put on a pedestal, forced to be a sage

My only crime is going to be my rage
It's war against all restrictions, I am going to wage

FLAWS OF THE LAW by Taofeeq Onafowokan

A crime is a sexual digger
Luring the maiden not to her wills
Wallowing in false and force
To paint the Five minutes desire

A crime is a climate changer
In the raiment of violence
To change the present weather
And live a temple of its own canopy

A crime is a looter
That sucks the breast of a nation
In a mask of patriotic spirit
And inflame with webbed poverty

Give birth to a second name
It still flaws the rock of the law

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Bandits by Ridwan Olalekan Adeniran

They are the ones called muggers
That force all dimes out from travelers
Scourging mortals in trailers and turn men to beggars.

Their game is done with munitions
Shooting in air as indication
Making banks assume liquidation after operation.
Their name sounds so scary
Storming homes in hurry
Ceasing victims salary and rendering them weary.

Their fame is in the veracity of their vice
And the unshakeable pitiless principle in their stance.

"We are here writing stories to be read by coming generations. Everyday, we live is a leaf to be opened when we leave"

Crime Against Nature by Dolapo Sanusi

Always, they pleaded
"Cut one, plant ten"
Only for you
Slashing them in forests
With your raging, blinding axe
As your lordship pleased

If only you respected laws of the land

Probably the falling trees
Wouldn't avenge their homicide
Splattering your head

None escapes
Crimes against nature

Crime by Etoh Precious

Matachi told me to breathe
It will all be fine
I didn't seem relieved
It was like suffocating
I did not know what I was in for
But I could take it
She's my mother anyways
Maybe she had a reason
Maybe she didn't
What is important is that father is gone
Screaming in another planet
Being drunk in another planet
In the end the only crime I committed
Was to love mother.

BLOODLUST by Obinna Marvalo Neboh

Everyday I breach the peripheral of her existence
And yet my passage Leave no evidence

Mid day it was that the chance came
And hurrying over the fence
Gazing at that figure which clouded my sense
I stole through the open door
And tiptoed towards her on all four

I grabbed her and covered her mouth from behind
Took her to the nearest room inside
Ripping off the shallow clothing
And laughed as I saw the fear and undisguised loathing

As I devour the fruit of APHRODITE try as she might
This is not a fight she could win
And I take much pleasure in this sin

Where?

(Crime unto Nature) by Olaleye Doyin

Where do we go from here?
Into some planet or hell?
Into a cocoon of eggs?
Or into a large form of shell?

We have stolen nature's morsel
Her trees, we fell
Her offsprings, disappeared
We are now trapped in her cell
Feeding on poverty and ill health

Our air became our death
Our land now scream for help
Our homes became den
Of diseases, of cries, of tears

Where do we go from here?

Four, One and Nine by Akinlabi Ololade

Remember in our world not very fine,
We were beautiful but so ugly
That our images irritated the mirrors.

Forget not our days of glittering darkness,
We were the wise fools that lured
Tomorrow even before its breath was birthed.

We were the sages that staged

The platform for hardworking men
But at the closure of the camera's eyes

When silence shut the mouth of the day,
Our hands marched to the depth of their
Reward wombs and we aborted their pregnant labour.

Like chameleons we appear,
We are the four, the one and the nine.

SOOTED ACT by DAUDA ONAWOLA

Imbued by darkness and primed by lust, act of rust;
In a jiffy, cream in air attracted dust thus criminal.
On account of a thing, evil speaks via the mind then body;
It goes by the cognomen 'crime' and ends not ever in redolent rhyme.
Pronounced against human authorities by and large sovereign divinity
By an entity whose conscience is draped in a cloak woven by Beelzebub;
Thou art such deed whose revelation incurs ignominy.

There exist vast grounds for thee to manifest,
Withal, I wish you never found the light of aliveness.
I begrudge thine presence for thine terminus is rue at both ends.

From the nascence of macrocosm, I wish nature had laid a privy path

For the smoke being evoked by the burning soul of Old Nick
Such which shalt remain standoffish from the realms of light.

©DAUDA ONAWOLA

LIFE AGAINST CRIME by MANTHENA DAMODARA CHARY

Nurture rapture till you hold it in capture
Structure all future with genuine culture
Love your life to cherish its rare wonder
Act sensibly for lofty living in splendour

Pure passions turn living into a rainbow
Adding colours to life for gorgeous glow
Life lived well conveys a message sound
Glorifying your living with ideas profound

Delve deep into depths of your lofty living
You can relish nectar with all your striving
Estrange yourself from the grip of despair
To build your glory with consummate care

Let your avowed goals attract final fruition
Surmounting strikingly formidable friction

Emerging Trends In Ladies Handbags And Purses

by YakekponoAbasi Adams



Bags can either make or break an outfit. Girls who are into bags know this fact and are very much careful in picking up the bag that could suit their outfits. If you are someone who is greatly into fashion, you probably have the feeling of lusting over gorgeous trends of bags. People, particularly women, always look for something fresh that will complete their wardrobe. It's a constantly emerging trend each year. And this is what women look forward to. As the year starts, new designs of handbags and purses will definitely entice the craving eyes of fashionistas.



Like other kinds of fashion, footwear and clothing, the trend of bags is another work of history. It comes and it goes and it comes back. What makes it fresh is the color and outfit it perfectly goes with. To make your whole year fashionably perfect, get to know the emerging trends of handbags and purses for this year.



Clutch Handbag

It's the hottest shape of the year. Grab one for your own. With this vintage and retro-looking handbag, you will definitely sport a flair for an antique style. A clutch handbag is perfect for ladies on the go. Many businesswomen like it because they can just take it anywhere they go. This small cute thing is actually big enough to hold your things.

Patent Handbag

It's a chic handbag for everyday use. Whether you would like to go on a formal meeting or spend a night out with your friends, this patent handbag goes perfectly with any occasion; smooth or funk.

Mini Handbag

You were drowned by last year's huge bags. Now is the time to go mini. Get the basics, put them inside your mini handbag and you are ready to go!

Metallic Handbag

With its luster, no wonder it's been coming back the trend. Just pick some fabulous color and have a refreshing look on the metallic trend that's been a part of the past.

Convertible Handbag



Hang it across your body or over your shoulder or use it in a handbag mode, it doesn't matter. This gives the lady the always prepared effect. Convert it, pull the strap longer and you are on the go mode. Convert it and pull the straps shorter and you are now in the chic mode.

Pocket Handbag

Women are fond of small things in nature; wallet, coin purse, key chain, mobile phone, organizer and others. But the thing is women are also forgetful in nature. Thus a pocket handbag is perfect for these women. With lots of pockets in it, all your small things have a space without giving you the hardship of looking for them inside your bag.

White Handbag

With all the different colors that go along with the trend, white stands out. Nothing feels fresher than carrying with you a clean white handbag. It's trendy and refreshing.

Oversized bags

The trend changes very often. However, there are always some that do not go with the change. Still, some shapes and size remain every season and oversized handbags are one of them. Nothing beats a bag that carries everything you need. It is perfect for those who love to work and those who are always on the go. Put some pieces of your shirt, towel, personal hygiene necessities, cosmetics and even one extra pair of shoes and you are ready to go.

Remember that a handbag is a big part of one's outfit. It should fit your body type. Being in the trend is a plus but check if it's right for you. Don't be shy to try on these handbags at the store. Check if it looks good on you and if it feels comfortable wearing it. If not, don't hesitate to try another one. Do not forget that bags can actually flatter your looks as much as a pair of jeans does. Moreover, bags do not ruin your looks. So put some sense of style and taste when picking a bag of your choice.



You already know the hottest handbags of the year, now is the time to check your wardrobe. Do you have them? If you do, check if the color goes with the trend, take them out and give some refreshing look on them. But of course, fresh is fresh and fresh is new and be fresh by checking out some of the hottest bags this year. You worked hard last year and it wouldn't harm you to reward yourself at the start of the year with some of what a woman like you fancy most – and if you know someone who is a bag lady, perhaps your mother, sister, wife or girlfriend, make her happy by giving her one the hottest bags this year. It will surely paint a smile on her face.

7 things to do at 21

Life after adolescence can be a lot more stifling than one can imagine. Turning 21 means that you've learnt some lessons from parents, friends and mere strangers—and that you're ready to meet the real ordeal found in an idealistic-stitched world.

Growing up as a child, life seems to be a never ending sweet journey that will always serve man with the finest gold and platinum to clasp on, but when maturity starts to kick in you will realize that the world gradually becomes complex as you get older. When one is growing up, that pampering, slowly turns into an infused independence if reality is allowed to do the justice. Parents tend to shift gears when nurturing a teenage child compared to how they nurture a tweedy little toddler or even a 9 or 12 year old. So basically each step when growing up is blended with some sort of specific care to it.

Now, when you do away with adolescence, you automatically enter a world where living is a little bit scruffy when you play a sleeping-dog day in day out, a world that is more complex when viewed from various angles. It's obvious at 21 you would have completed GCSE level, at least if you didn't toss grades along the way. First; your parents will cut some certain expenses spent on you, next you're sent to further your studies, if not, you'll be persuaded to look for a part time job, at least one that will cater for basic needs like, cosmetics, clothes, accessories and other 'easy-to-get stuffs. When you reach 21, you have to pick up a few skills that will guide you through in every circumstance you meet along your narrow way. These skills will not only blend you for a short period of time but will also be a stepping stone to reach the higher peak. These skills often times act as a foundation, if you really aspire to be an incredible person in the future.

So, what are some of the things you should do at 21? Well, it depends how you want your life to be in the few years or your entire future. Out of those many things you can do at 21, let us talk about 7 of them, yes, only 7. 7 things you should do at 21, if you really want to make a bang out there.

First of all, as a normal human being, you have to plan, set up a blue print that will guide you in every step you make, secondly, you have to execute your plan and turn your ideas into reality and finally you reap what you sow.

Now let's look at some of the 7 things to do at 21

PLAN

When we feel that it's time to build something, the first thing we do is planning, right? Just like when a builder is building a house, a plan is always grafted to guide him in every step while erecting the building. Many a times people choose to suffer because they lack that planning theory, our lives turn into a trembling building before collapsing because we swept the planning theory under the carpet.

If you truly want to work out the jinx of life, you have to plan, for tomorrow and for the future. Set up some sort of draft that acts as a mirror to reflect pictures of how you will turn out to be in the next years to come, this helps you to stick to your goals, it helps define the content you meet along the way. At 21 you should be able to know what you want in life, what you want to achieve in a certain period of time and what you want to do with what you achieve. Once you know what you want in life, planning becomes an easy task to help you derive that which you want to acquire.

Take for instance if you figure out that you want to become a photographer, writer, designer or anything that makes a difference in your life, what do you do next? You plan how you're going to kick it off right? How you will use your skills to build a concrete foundation and to achieve your goals. Planning your future as early as 21 years will certainly make it bright.

USE WHAT YOU HAVE TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

Are you still waiting for your government to call out names that will fill the inexorable capacities in its systematic ministries? Well, if you're patiently waiting for your name to be called out then good for you, take a five.

Many teenagers are roaming around streets because they've nothing to do. Government has failed to resuscitate the livelihoods of people, especially youths.

Like in Africa, a number of youths across the continent are jobless, some still grappling with the high poverty levels that swing on the continent's atmosphere.

At 21 you should be able to discover yourself, your abilities, discovering what you can and you can't do. When you discover that inborn ability in you, it becomes a choice as to whether you rise or walk on all fours and remain on ground zero.

Pick up your brushes, add a few strokes of paint on a sheet and see how things turn out to be. Honestly, using what you have to get what you want won't require a rack sack of money as capital because you only need some basic stuffs to get started. If you're good at photography, why not give it a try and take a few shots to see whether it will push you somewhere or leave you dormant. But it's an assurance that it wouldn't ditch you, like seriously. It's through these small pieces that a bigger piece is formed. Not everyone is going to college or university due to financial constraints and other impediments. But if we all try to use what we have to get what we want, nothing will stop us from breaking through.

START SAVING MONEY FOR RETIREMENT

Start saving money for retirement at 21? *Sounds weird huh?*

Yeah, start saving money for your retirement. As the saying goes 'the earlier the better.' Imagine if you saved \$5 or more a week for about 35 years, how much would you reap at 56, and probably as you grow older your financial savings gets a little bit stronger and thicker. So if you saved about \$5 a week, you would probably get \$9,100 (If my math hasn't deceived me.)

Of course starting to save money for retirement at 21 is kind of funny and unrealistic because of the long way you walk just to reach the target, but hey, it's rhetorically exhilarating when you give it a try. You don't have to make it look like it's draining the hell out of you. Just make it routine, let it be part of you, forget that you're saving for retirement, just do it as if you're doing for tomorrow and the end results will be exceptional, very (very) exceptional and you'll be proud that you made the right decision in the first place.

Make sure at 21, you would have had an account already set up, it's much safer and secure to wire your savings at the bank than dropping your cents in a box or bottle, or whatever people used in the past.

See, when you reach 21, most of the decisions are done by you (of course if they are right decisions) your parents will only guide you on how to tackle some of them and see to it that you're always on the right lane at the right time.

So, basically, starting to save money for retirement at 21 is an ideal decision that will not only save you when your organization stirs some bad beans for you which may later on stress the hell out of you but it will also help you when you get stuck along the way. Remember that you can still thicken the amount you drop in into your savings, the more you earn, the more you put into the savings.

REVISE YOUR EXPENDITURE

How much do you use in a day, week or month? Find out about that and get on your drawing board as soon as possible.

Most of the times we spend our money carelessly on things that aren't needful in our daily lives. Check how much you're spending in a week and ask yourself if you're doing yourself justice, ask yourself if what you spending your money on brings back what you lose in the process. If you're spending much on unnecessary stuff, you just have to revise your expenditure and cut off some expenses, like going for lunch 24/7 or shopping things that wouldn't squeeze the life out of you if not gotten from the mall shelves. If you were to spend a minimal two days in a week without having lunch, would you die? Certainly not, you wouldn't get broken; it's just the matter of getting used. Take for instance if you spend about \$4-\$5 a day during weekdays, how much do you lose? You lose about \$20-\$25, and what if you cut off 2 meals, that's for two days only, you save yourself a \$10 bill that would be useful on other stuff.

If you also spend much on airtime, hey, try to cut off a bit there. Nowadays, communication has been simplified unlike the way it was in the past where we never had any social chatting sites, thus we would spend much when making a phone call, but today we have social networking sites that run on affordable data. So spending more money on airtime for communication shouldn't be a justifiable excuse that you're doing it for the sake of communication. You can buy weekly data, or four times in seven days, it won't eat you up, moreover you have to spend some time for you alone, spend time away from social networking and meet up with friends, family or new people.

So, this idea of spending money on something that isn't vital to your livelihood should be revised and scrutinized once and for all because there are things that are worth spending money on.

SPLIT YOUR TIME

Time (time, time!) Did you know that time is the most valuable asset that every human being isn't denied. How you use it, is what determines the shape of your success. How much time do you spend on doing something that is of important to you and your future? Ask yourself.

Many teenagers today don't actually use their time well enough on things that are important and beneficial, thus they end up straying and engaging in all sorts of vices. But, what if you invested your time in success, how much would you reap? A lot, right? Exactly, time should be invested in something that pays well, be it your talent, studies, work or whatever you think will see you through to the top.

Every particular schedule on our daily living requires a specific amount of time that it needs to run on, thus for us to be on the right track and making sure that we aren't mixing up things we need to split our time. If you're studying, get yourself a certain amount of time that will cutter for studying only, if you're working, do the same, if you will be meeting friends, do as wise. But remember that the time you invest in you should be taken seriously like any other important aspect in life.

KNOW YOUR FRIENDS

At 21 you should be able to tell who your real friends are and who your passing-by friends are. Friends play an important role in our lives, they help us when things go bad, they're with us through thick and thin and above all they always want to see the best out of us. However not all friends are as good as a green apple, some use us for their own benefit, some only infuse negative thoughts in us and some are as bad as cigarette smoke, they're fun to hang around with but always damage our inner capacity for great things, they make our lives sweet without realizing that we aren't even excelling to reach our goals.

As an aspirant for something great in life, you have to pick the right company of friends that will share common goals with you, friends that are always moving with you in terms of progress, friends that will be able to pull you when you get

stuck, and friends that will pick you up when you get knocked down. At 21 you should be able to control your ship, know who gets in and who gets out of your voyage.

DIG FOR INSPIRATION

Look around, see what amuses you, and find out what inspires you to do great. Try to meet new people, both on social networks and the real world. There are great minds out there that are waiting to share knowledge with you, and when you meet them you'll be grateful to find out that inasmuch as the world seems to be complex, there are great people who still exist. Hang around with them and get to learn some new skills that will help build up your future. See, inspiration is found in places where knowledge stands as a tool in multi-diversification pathways. Stick yourself in those ends and read between lines. You only become great when you meet great people. And don't only hit on successful people, walk around places and see how people live, learn a few lessons from them and apply them to your mission.

Growing up isn't difficult because it's a natural process but living is, because life depends on how you handle yourself and how you fit yourself in a complex society. Many suffer because of what they missed out back then, because they didn't build a foundation before erecting their buildings. If you were to start building your future at a tender age, everything would fall into place without you having to stress much on problems that rain when you get older. While you're still capable of doing everything, invest in yourself, invest in tomorrow, and invest in your future because if you don't do it now it will never happen.

[Chanda Chongo](#) (aka Rabbit) is a 20 year old writer and blogger hailing from Zambia's tourist capital, Livingstone. He's an Afro-Culture activist and peace advocate trying to bring the world closer to Africa. More of his works can be found on his blog **[AFROCABIN](#)**.

On the need to write in our own voice in poetries

by **Amaka Felly Obioji**

“There is magic in writing, there is power in holding a pen and all that flows are poems like a river, this I tell you is peace, this is more than heaven.”

I use the above line from one of my piece as my introduction because poetry means a lot to me, it is therapeutic. Poetry as a form of writing can be dated back to the Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh, though many have argued that the early poems evolved from the folk songs such as the Chinese shijing.

Poetry like every other genre of literature through the years has evolved, the traditional way of writing poems which bases on the use of aesthetic and rhythmic qualities of language such as phonaesthetics, sound, symbolism and metre is gradually not been employed or enjoyed by some modern writers, poetry today has found its new way of evoking feeling and more emotions without embracing most styles from the classic writers like Rumi, Goethe, Dante and the rest. Some writers have found a different voice of theirs they use in conveying their message in their art and to me it is a welcome idea, poets like Nayyirah Waheed, Rupi Kaur and Ijeoma Umebinyo whose writing styles doesn't reflect the classics but still something to look forward to, their powerful narratives through poetry it's a tale tell that we as writers can still achieve amazing poems without conforming to the poetic rules if one wishes.

Poetry for years has been a tool for many to convey information in a very concise form and still be able to have meaning, depth knowledge of the topic, good poetries evokes a special kind of emotions and leaves one gasping for more, the kind writers like Rupi Kaur, Ijeoma Umebinyuo and Nayyirah Waheed makes are something good. Though the three writers has similar things in common, apart from their great writing skill, which is almost edible, they talk more of social status, race, color and the need of self love in a world that demands a lot. Very crafted in their craft, they write amazingly that they reflect the sadness, the joy and the message in just lines that flows like river to the heart of the reader, which I have termed therapeutic, there is nothing in the world that beats a good poem, however you see it.

As some writers' struggles to conform to the rule that guides poetry, missing the whole necessity to create a message and failing their voice. I will suggest that as good as those rules are, the flavor it adds to poetries, that it isn't unconventional if written without, though one must not defy the art itself to make a mess of it, conscious writing is still needed. A personal study of the shortlisted book of the NLNG Nigerian prize for Literature "Garri For Breakfast" by Seun Lari- Williams, the book a poetry collection conveys a lot of message, the intriguing part is the voice of the writer which could be felt in every page, it didn't borrow much of these rules but still achieved poems worth reading, the book which tries to explore the Nigerian living among many social ills employed simplicity to narrate it's story without leaving no stone unturned.

Poetic works which tends to achieve its aim of passing information, knowledge, without trying hard to conform to the passed down rules are good too, same goes to works which adheres to the rules, it doesn't make any of them bad poems but the need to shift from all these rules will make room for more amazing work filled with sincerity rather than one too conscious to borrow qualities of the Shakespearean poems forgetting that the individual voice matters a lot and we all should be comfortable in it.

Amaka Felly Obioji is a creative writer, poet and lover of African literature. She believes in the need to tell our stories in our own voice without fear and surrounding rules, she believes that difference is normal.

why would you be interested in screenwriting?

by Casey M. Millette

You`ve done it. It`s taken you years to finish your novel, and finally, it`s been published! Now, the next step is to make it into a movie. Shouldn`t be too difficult, right? Delve into the realm of screenwriting, asking questions such as what is the difference between a screenplay and a novel? Learn from recorded interviews with screenwriters as to why they chose their craft, and what keeps them invested. Thus begins “Why Would You Want to be a Screenwriter?”, an article exploring what it takes to be a writer in the film business.

“The difference between life and the movies is that a script has to make sense, and life doesn`t,” said Joseph L. Mankiewicz, one of the greatest film directors of all time. Nothing about the above statement could be truer. Unlike life, a screenplay has certain rules it must follow if it is to ever survive the challenging industry. Screenwriting inspires both the creative and formulaic aspects of writing, perfect for someone who loves putting both parts of their brain to good use.

However, unlike writing fiction, the industry is much more difficult to work with. One must take into account the responsibilities of buckling down to write, the lifestyle in general, whether an education is worth it, the difference between writing a novel and a screenplay, and the future of screenwriting.

Writing, whether for a novel or for the screen, requires intense selfdiscipline and skill to be noticed. The most successful screenwriters are some of the most committed people there are. They understand how important it is to write, face the “dreaded” blank page, and produce on deadlines. If they are not responsible for their work, then it will never see the light of day.

However, because the responsibilities and incentives are one and the same, that means that screenwriters have a lot of freedom. Unless a writer is called to be on set with a specific shooting schedule, any lifestyle will fit. From stay-at-home mom to someone to lives mostly on the road, the urge to right is inescapable. There is no one to answer to. If a screenwriter wants the bills to be paid, he/she has to find the motivation to grind at the computer just a little longer.

Depending on the size of a writer's laptop, or if he wants to just use the traditional pencil and paper, writing can be done anywhere at any time. Because films are such massive projects, the writer has to be fully invested. The abilities to pace one's self, create deadlines, do adequate research, and spend time and energy are all critical to the job. Then, before the writer can even sit down and begin work, there's the loglines, taglines, overviews, and treatments. Pre-production requires due amount of patience. If all these traits cohere in sync with one another, screenwriting is a more than doable career choice, especially as technology shifts. Determined writers typically begin with normal day jobs and implement their writing around their working hours until they are established (Porter, "Interview with a Screenwriter").

Even when everything falls into place and proper contacts have been made, income does not always make the cut. A writer gets paid along the lines of a contract, if offered one by a studio. Like the minimum wage for a job, there is also a minimum wage for a screenplay. After the writer establishes his or herself, and if their products are in demand, the wage will be increased. Then there is always the option of being a freelance writer who gets paid according to the profits their movie actually makes. It is not until a writer's name is well known does the money and offers roll in. Screenwriting requires dedication, perseverance, and passion. The artist must be fully dedicated to every work he or she produces. If the writer is not moved by the story, then what is the point of all the mind-grinding, difficult work that the cutthroat industry requires?

There are hundreds of film schools out there, but that does not necessarily mean that a budding writer needs to attend a full course. The only mandatory technique required is to be able to tell an intriguing story using masterful language. Then again, full understanding of how proper, "real" English works is helpful too. Dominique Blanchard, a screenwriter and graduate of Georgia State University, stated on March 21, 2017, "You have to be careful about the university, particularly in the film business. There's that whole thing about 'if you can't do, then you teach'. I hate to say it, but that is a deep reality for the industry. Nobody just decides to head backstage, especially when writing. No one does that. The majority of teachers end up being retired actors or directors that didn't really do much, or directors from theater that are now trying to break into film. You have to be really careful about who you learn from."

Because film is such an unstable industry, successful writers cannot let the market get in their heads. Learning to follow instincts and express from the heart on a page takes practice. Even though film colleges might not be the best option

for all, writing workshops are frequent and easy to get into. Those who want to perfect their craft benefit enormously. Blanchard quoted,

“. . . Writing is still an art, and art comes from within. You have a lot of requirements for structure and format, but if you want to take writing classes, those are great. I don't necessarily think that you have to have a degree, but you have to have a foundation where somebody can point you in the right direction. So when you take these classes, you will get guidance and they will break down screenplays.”

Screenwriting is meant for people with visions. As Blanchard said above, screenplays make it possible for a writer to execute their precise ideas on the screen for all to see. “Story telling is more important than rhetoric,” according to Charles Deemer, a retired professor from Portland State University. *“A screenplay is not a literary document.”* It speaks action, not thoughts. In this way, it is possibly more challenging than writing a novel.

Just like any other craft, screenwriting requires practice, patience, study, and talent. Years of pain and learning experiences prelude every success, particularly in the film industry. Because the screenwriter is considered “vulnerable” compared to directors, producers, and actors, he or she has to sort their priorities. They must decide whether family, career, or integrity will come first. Blanchard shared a personal story about how she had to defend her integrity and her work against the temptation of publishing her own movie. *“When you invest in other people, you can't control how they see your stuff. My first script that I ever wrote, I got a director who wanted to put a lot of sex in it, and that really devalued the movie for me. . . I could have just taken the deal, or have been really offended, but what I chose to see was, ‘wow, my screenplay is not as full as it needs to be.’* If it was full enough, the idea of including these kinds of scenes would not even be considered. I think it is all a matter of perspective, and that's what you have to remember, especially in anything that you do in film and television. The industry is cutthroat. Nobody wants to be your friend until you can do something for them. . . . The field is really superficial. . . If you get your feelings hurt, you have a choice. You could get bitter or you could recognize your mistakes and learn different strategies.”

Because of rising technology, movies will only get better. Studios have bigger budgets and have a better ability to bring worlds to life. That means screenwriters must step up to the challenge. However, mostly because of the economy, it is difficult to find anyone who is brave enough to face the giants. Most writers are falling into television. If their script for a particular show fails, then they don't have anything to lose. There are better (and more) chances when it comes to writing a television series. Thirty years ago, it used to be that ninety

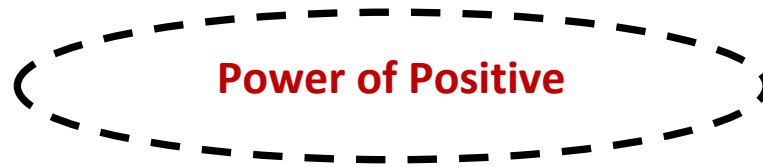
percent of students wanted to pursue writing for the movies, and ten percent wanted to go into movies. Now, it's fifty-fifty. There are just no original scripts in Hollywood. There are too many risks.

Although many writers daydream about seeing an Oscar on their mantelpiece, it is important to set realistic goals. To S. Lane Porter, a freelance screenwriter, it is more important for her to create a work that “. . . a person remembers from childhood, or the one they put on the television when they're having a bad day, or the one that comforts them like their favorite sweatshirt. . . .” After all the above, it is logical to conclude that most writers pursue screenwriting “. . . not for the money, but for the soul.”

Screenwriting not for people who wish to weave with words and have an awe for the English language. As Blanchard said above, The screenwriter is not allowed to be wordy. Directness is key. Screenwriting grants the writer the possibility of telling visually appealing stories, rather than a more poetic masterpiece. If this is what the wannabee seeks, then screenwriting might just be the perfect fit.

Screenwriting is an increasingly difficult industry to break into. People should always consider the topics mentioned above before they take up the gauntlet of writing movies. However, it is not impossible. For those who are willing to put in the work can find the opportunities and will become the next great film-writers.

Atlanta, Georgia-born, **Casey M. Millette**, sixteen, has been into writing since she was five. Her love of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* has inspired her to write *Cursed*, a fantasy series. You can follow her author Facebook page and www.caseymmillette.com.



life is what it is for a reason

Motivation and inspiration will always be the talk of everyday but hearing them is not assurance that they have positive effect in our lives. It then remains a personal responsibility for us all to act and use what we would have heard. First you hear, thus listening attentively, assess what you heard and put it into practice.

Most of us do not suffer because of lack of provision or in simple terms poverty. Our suffering is as a result of poor sight towards life responsibilities. Our greatest resources in life are our minds and those around us. Our minds think, but to think they will need to learn something before they can digest. It's just like the literal digestion, you need to put in something so that the digestive system will have something to work on. So one needs people and experiences to learn from and adapt the thoughts and strive to develop them.

Life in reality is like the Christian religion, you seek grace but you don't simply wish for it. There is a certain channel to be followed up until a request is made unto the Most high. For the Christian to reach his father in heaven, firstly he has to listen or read the holy scriptures and meditate on them, identify his problems and activate his faith. The next thing is to connect with the Holy Spirit who will then intercede on his behalf to Yeshua who will also convey the message to God the father.

In the same line, our daily lives can be led too. We learn new stuff and ideas everyday but the challenge is on what we do with them everyday. Do we find amusement in what we learnt alone and keep the award for our glorification? When will we then use that new knowledge practically to benefit us and our surroundings?

It will only require us time to ponder on the acquired knowledge, seek where it is applicable and apply it.

Jurgen Namupira is a published freelance writer who specializes in motivational speeches, short stories, poetry and drama/fiction. He is Zimbabwean by birth and citizenship but currently living and studying Electronics in Cape Town, South Africa. **Jurgen** is a passionate writer who seeks to impact the world through writing.

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“inemesit”

Tingles

Inemesit!

You are to me; a charming flower

Your beauty in my heart shall not fade nor shall I your sweetness deflower

Under the sun or in the rain only love, to you shall I shower



Yes! I know rough winds shall blow

Yes! I know hard times shall

varying punches throw

But, only care & tender compassion shall I show

For my love for you surpasses what meddlesome hard times can ever know

Come sail with me as your captain

See! We will tour across lands & gigantic mountain(s)

Love shall bear the lamp, leading us to gleeful fountain(s)

Come take my hand, my fair lady

For you are cute & sweet

Like a new born baby

You are soft and warm

Like a lady's teddy

Come take my hand, don't be coy

For you are far charming and graceful than Helen of Troy

You are precious to me

Like a little child's toy

My feelings for you, no grief

Can destroy

With you; hand in hand I want to grow greys

With the sunshine of your

Smile casting radiant rays

I want to be your husband

To wipe away the tears

I want to be your lover

So please baby say: Yes...

Edidiong Bassey is a Nigerian from Eket, Akwa Ibom State. He is a Lawyer, Poet, Writer and Teacher. **Edidiong** believes in using literature(poetry) as a medium of social engineering. He is the author of "Unbound Echoes", a collection of poems.

Marilyn Monroe



Marilyn Monroe (born **Norma Jeane Mortenson**; June 1, 1926 – August 5, 1962) was an American actress and model. Famous for playing comic "dumb blonde" characters, she became one of the most popular sex symbol of the 1950s and was emblematic of the era's attitudes towards sexuality. Although she was a top-billed actress for only a decade, her films grossed \$200 million by the time of her unexpected death in 1962. More than half a century after her death, she continues to be considered a major popular culture icon.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Monroe spent most of her childhood in foster homes and an orphanage and married at the age of sixteen. While working in a radioplane factory in 1944 as part of the war effort, she was introduced to a photographer from the First Motion Picture Unit and began a successful pin-up modeling career. The work led to short-lived film contracts with Twentieth Century-Fox (1946–1947) and Columbia Pictures (1948). After a series of minor film roles, she signed a new contract with Fox in 1951. Over the next two years, she became a popular actress with roles in several comedies, including *As Young as You Feel* and *Monkey Business*, and in the dramas *Clash by Night* and *Don't Bother to Knock*. Monroe faced a scandal when it was revealed that she had posed for nude photos before becoming a star, but rather than damaging her career, the story resulted in increased interest in her films.

Monroe's troubled private life received much attention. She struggled with substance abuse, depression, and anxiety. She had two highly publicized marriages, to retired baseball star Joe DiMaggio and playwright Arthur Miller, both of which ended in divorce. On August 5, 1962, she died at age 36 from an overdose of barbiturates at her home in Los Angeles.

The possibility that Monroe had accidentally overdosed was ruled out, because the dosages found in her body were several times over the lethal limit. Her doctors stated that she had been prone to "severe fears and frequent depressions" with "abrupt and unpredictable" mood changes, and had overdosed several times in the past, possibly intentionally. Due to these facts and the lack of any indication of foul play, the coroner classified her death as a "probable suicide".

Monroe was an international star and her sudden death was front-page news in the United States and Europe. According to Lois Banner, "it's said that the suicide rate in Los Angeles doubled the month after she died; the circulation rate of most newspapers expanded that month", and the *Chicago Tribune* reported that they had received hundreds of phone calls from members of the public who were requesting

"When I was five I think, that's when I started wanting to be an actress. I loved to play. I didn't like the world around me because it was kind of grim, but I loved to play house. It was like you could make your own boundaries... When I heard that this was acting, I said that's what I want to be... Some of my foster families used to send me to the movies to get me out of the house and there I'd sit all day and way into the night. Up in front, there with the screen so big, a little kid all alone, and I loved it."

—*Monroe in an interview for Life in 1962*

information about her death. French artist Jean Cocteau commented that her death "should serve as a terrible lesson to all those, whose chief occupation consists of spying on and tormenting film stars", her former co-star Laurence Olivier deemed her "the complete victim of ballyhoo and sensation", and *Bus Stop* director Joshua Logan stated that she was "one of the most unappreciated people in the world".

In the following decades, several conspiracy theories have been introduced to contradict suicide as the cause of Monroe's death, including murder and accidental overdose. The murder speculations first gained mainstream attention with the publication of Norman Mailer's *Marilyn: A Biography* in 1973, and in the following years became widespread enough for the Los Angeles County District Attorney John Van de Kamp to conduct a "threshold investigation" in 1982 to see whether a criminal investigation should be opened. No evidence of foul play was found.

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The giraffe women of Burma



by YakekponoAbasi Adams



- The Kayan women, of Kayah state, 'stretch' their necks with brass rings as an elongated neck is a sign of beauty in Kayan culture and have been nicknamed 'giraffe' women as a result.

- While the brass coils make the women's necks appear long, in reality the weight of the rings pushes down the muscles around the collarbone and compresses the rib cage - meaning their necks appear longer than they are.

- Kayah state was until recently closed to outsiders, opening to tourists in 2014.

- Women of the tribe wear a coil of brass rings around their necks from early age.
- Some people think that without the rings, the neck would break but this is not true.



- Women wear the neck rings to differentiate themselves from other minorities.



- In the past, neck rings had a protective role from wild tigers in the mountain territory. Women remained at home while men went hunting in the forest and sometimes wild animals would come to the village and attack people. If a tiger bit a woman's or child's neck, they could survive.

- The village is very rural and bursting with character. Children run around naked or in colourful handmade clothes.

- The people are laid back and welcoming.

They are more than happy to discuss their way of living with a local guide who can translate for you.

fear



Fear is an unpleasant emotion caused by the threat of danger, pain or harm. Fear is also feeling of anxiety concerning the outcome of something or the safety of someone. The likelihood of something unwelcome happening. Fear has its origin from the Greek language [*Phobos*] meaning to put to flight by terrifying (to scare away).

Fear can be either positive or negative. The positive kind of fear has to do with that which draws all humans to their maker [God]. ‘And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.’ When a person has the fear of God in him or her, there is the sense of faithfulness, love and a heart that is perfect. That which a person has because of the fear of the Lord seeks the welfare of others. The negative things we experience or are happening in the world has its roots in people not having the fear of God. When there is the fear of God, we take care of nature because we have been charged to do that by God.

Hatred, murder, cheating, stealing, corruption and other social vices will be a thing of the past if there is the fear of God in us. This kind of fear is positive since it only brings peace, security and love for ones neighbour and nature.

There is the other kind which is the negative kind of fear. This kind of fear is the unpleasant, threat of danger, pain or harm. When we allow this kind of fear to have a grip on us, we are prevented from achieving anything positive in life. There are 365 verses in the Bible which tells us not to fear or to be afraid. This makes up the number of days in the year. For God knows that the enemy will always try to bring some kind of fear in our way, for this reason He has given us a positive word not to be afraid each day of the year. The most dangerous enemy to success is fear.

Fear prevents an individual from having a sound mind. When one is not mentally sound, success becomes very difficult and if not check, it becomes highly

impossible to be successful.

God commanded Joshua the army commander of Israel not to be afraid or to take away fear from him. Joshua only became a great commander because he never allowed fear to seize him. He never harboured fear in him even when the people they were to fight against had more weapons and giants. They marched forward with the presence of God and the surety of Him being with them. Tell me an unsuccessful person and I will point to you his or her fears. Fear has prevented a lot of people from achieving their God given potential, talents and gifts. Success is for the brave and the courageous, which is the opposite of fear. Boldness, brevity and courage are the hallmark of most successful people on earth. You can ask any successful person and he or she will tell you that, they took the bold step of courage to achieve the unthinkable. To achieve anything worthy in life, you need to take risk.

Abraham the father of faith did not achieve this title by harbouring fear but when he took the bold step to move from his country into a country he knew not. Abraham could have used different methods and approach just to excuse himself from pursuing the plan of God for him. During the time or era of Abraham, war was the order of the day. When travelling, any person or nation could attack and kill you. So he could have used all these to prevent his going, but he never allowed the fear to hold him back and we know the entire story of what happened. From him and his descendants we have the Israelites, if he had not take the courage to step out, who knows what will have become of the Israelites.

Your success, potentials, talents, gifts and achievements are trapped inside of you because of the fear factor. The enemy knows that, when you are able to take away the fear in you, there is nothing that can stop you from realising your dreams.

Now listen to this motivation verse from the Bible, “For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of sound mind.” God has given us power to overcome any fear preventing you from achieving our destiny purported to us.

Shake off the negative fear and move on. You are more than able to achieve whatever you set your heart to do with the positive fear of God in you.

Pastor Charles Fordjour is a passionate man for God. He has the heart for the youth as he tries to encourage and counsel them. He is a product from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. He also schooled at Great Commission Academy of Ghana and currently studying at Ghana Baptist University College (School of Theology and Ministry). **Pastor Charles** is married to Mrs. Hagar Fordjour.

Now Serving

how to cook ekpang nkwukwo by YakekponoAbasi Adams



Native to the Cross River and Akwa Ibom States of Nigeria, *Ekpang Nkwukwo* is one of the Nigerian cocoyam recipes. It can be eaten with or without cutlery; not only do I prefer the latter, but I also take care of this business on the floor. This is one food you crave for, but thoughts of when you'll finish cooking it scare you. Being a favorite dish of mine, the amount of time spent in preparing *Ekpang Nkwukwo* is actually worth it.

Ingredients for *Ekpang Nkwukwo*

- 500g Cocoyam
- 250g Water Yam
- Vegetables: Cocoyam leaves and Scent leaves
- Palm oil
- Crayfish
- Onions
- 300g shelled or 500g unshelled periwinkles
- Assorted Beef (optional)
- Dried Fish
- Pepper & Salt to taste

Note: Quantities of ingredients depend on the quantity of *Ekpang Nkwukwo* that you intend to cook.

Before you cook *Ekpang Nkwukwo*

- Rinse the beef and dry fish
- Cook the beef with seasoning till done.
- Peel, wash and grate the cocoyam and water yam; mix both together and set aside.
- Prepare the pot by rubbing a generous amount of red palm oil on the insides of the pot.
- Rinse the tender cocoyam leaves and tear into medium pieces.
- Wash the Pumpkin leaves and Scent leaves, cut them and set aside.
- Blend the pepper and crayfish and set aside.
- Wash the shelled or unshelled periwinkles.
- Boil reasonable amount of water

Cooking directions for *Ekpang Nkwukwo*

- If you will be using shelled periwinkles, place these at the base of the well-oiled pot.



- Scoop a small quantity of the mixed grated cocoyam and wateryam into a piece of the torn cocoyam leaf, wrap and place in the pot. Repeat this procedure till all the mixed grated cocoyam and wateryam are exhausted.



- Add the pepper, crayfish, unshelled periwinkle, dried fish, salt, onions and assorted beef.
- Add hot water to the level of the pot contents and set to cook on medium heat for about 30 minutes.
- Add the scent leaves and a generous amount of palm oil.
- Stir gently and cook for extra 5 minutes.
- Put down the pot. Your Ekpang Nkwukwo is ready to be served.

How to make Cucumber Lemonade

Lemonade is a classic favorite in Turkey as it is in most Middle Eastern countries. Who doesn't like lemonade on a boiling summer day? Do you make it often or just prefer something store bought? It might seem the easiest way, but definitely not the tastiest! Nothing could be better for refreshment than a big pitcher of **Fresh Cucumber Lemonade** because it is homemade and it contains the most refreshing foods of the season; cucumber, lemon and mint.



Cucumber lemonade is such a refreshing drink that you will be hooked once you try. I'm sure it will be your ultimate summer beverage. You can make it in large quantity, maybe overnight to chill it for long hours and relish the following day. A large glass of cucumber lemonade at breakfast will definitely zing-up your mornings!

Ingredients

- 2 cucumbers
 - ¼ bunch fresh mint
 - ½ teaspoon lemon zest, grated
 - ½ cup lemon juice
 - 4 cups hot water
 - 5 tablespoons sugar
- For garnish:
- ½ cup ice cubes
 - 1 cucumber, thinly sliced
 - Fresh mint leaves

Instructions

1. Wash the cucumbers very well.
2. Leave their skin on and grate them in a bowl.
3. Pound the mint leaves and lemon zest in a mortar and toss in the bowl.
4. Stir with a spoon and transfer them in a piece of cheese cloth.
5. Squeeze the juice into the bowl. Set aside. You can use a blender instead, but the flavors stand out with this method.
6. Mix sugar and lemon juice in hot water until sugar dissolves.
7. Combine this syrup with cucumber juice flavored with lemon zest and mint.
8. Chill it at least for an hour and serve with ice cubes, mint leaves and cucumber slices.

Recently, I was nearly raped when I went visiting a male friend of mine. This guy pushed me to the bed and tried to have his way with me. I was just lucky that he came back to his senses when I pushed him with all the strength in me. Most ladies do not get it that easy. They fall into the traps of perverts who physically abuse them and molest them sexually too. I posted my experience on social media and I was surprised at the response I got from my audience. People from all over the world were sending in their experiences. How relatives, neighbours, friends and strangers abused them when they were young. Majority of the victims claimed that this act was perpetrated by people they knew and even trusted.

For this column, we will be talking mostly about topics that are shied upon by society and we will be seeking redress for these. One of the dreaded subjects which almost every lady has an attempted experience is rape. Rape is prevalent in our society but people keep their mouths shut on it. Lives are being destroyed by this act but the laws are not being enforced in our part of the continent to deal drastically with these heinous crimes. African parents hardly educate their children on sex and its related complications. The school system and religious centres even shun this critical issue. Society must hear us this time.

Rape is a type of sexual assault usually involving sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual penetration carried out against a person without that person's consent. The act may be carried out by physical force, coercion, abuse of authority, or against a person who is incapable of giving valid consent, such as one who is unconscious, incapacitated, has an intellectual disability or is below the legal age of consent. A United Nations statistical report compiled from government sources showed that more than 250,000 cases of rape or attempted rape were recorded by

police annually across the globe. Nevertheless, rape is one of the most under-reported crimes because of fear, shame, shyness, victimization and harm. And both males and females are victims of this cruel act.

The effect of rape is devastating. People who are raped experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during the two weeks following the rape. They easily contemplate and attempt suicide. Sexual violence affect victims' relationships with their family, friends, and co-workers. They easily get angry and paranoid and mostly end up doing drugs to suppress their feeling of inferiority. Most get emotionally destabilised for life. They feel vulnerable, timid, and not fully in control of their lives. Some even die out of abortion and others contract deadly sexually related diseases.

Victims are stigmatized when they come out to report it. Most of the female victims are even usually blamed for seducing the men who raped them with their dressing, walking, talking, and calling for the rape with their attitude. Such a wrong mentality to have! Most ladies or gentlemen refuse to talk about their ordeal because of the shame and fear of being ridiculed and blamed. Guys who are raped keep silent over it because people will not even believe them and also because of the social orientation that men are strong, they keep mute so not to be laughed at.

Most people are not raped by strangers. They are raped by relatives, friends, partners and other times strangers. Why then do they decide not to report these culprits? Fear of being harmed by their predators. Most rapists threaten to kill their victims when they tell the secret to others. Shame; people do not want fingers to be pointed at them. The fear also of not tarnishing their family's image makes victims keep mute.

How can we get people to come out and talk then? People must stop pointing fingers at others who have been harassed. Women must not be ashamed of

themselves for going through such ordeals. It's never their fault. Parents must win the confidence of their children so that they can trust them enough to narrate their encounters.

To solve the problem of rape, men especially must be taught not to rape. Don't ever have sex with anyone against their will! Consent is key. The public must be educated on rape consciousness through awareness programmes. Governments need to address the political, social, and economic structures that subordinate women, and work to address the unemployment issues. All stakeholders in the society must engage in media awareness discussions. Schools must teach about sex education. There must be stricter laws to deter rapists. Counseling too must be provided to people with sexually defected tendencies. When all these are taken into consideration and implemented, the level of rape will reduce drastically.

Rachel Raphason graduated with a BA degree in Political Science and Linguistics from the University of Ghana where she is currently studying International Relations (MPhil). She is a short story writer, poet and essayist with works published in numerous literary outlets in Ghana. Rachel loves to smile and an advocate of women empowerment.

On Learning Poetry

with Akinsimoye Samuel O. Godson

Each passing season doesn't really pass, it brings forth yet another; there is night so we can appreciate the day when it comes – as without death, life makes no sense... Don't mind me, mind my words; they speak of me.

On that note, I welcome us to class, on Learning Poetry. On this edition, we shall be studying and adding the literary toga of rhyme to our caps today. Stop for a while and attempt these tasks using the 3Bs (1st B = (your)Brain, 2nd B = Book (a textbook), 3rd B = Buddy (a friend)):

1. Define rhyme
2. State any three types of rhyme
3. Highlight three ways of achieving rhyme.

Be sure you try the above before proceeding – would you cheat against yourself where you are your own invigilator? Of course not! So, let's pause...

* * * * *

Welcome back! Congrats if you attempted the tasks above. Here are some ideas on rhyme:

Definition:

Rhyme is the identical musical undertone in a poetic piece. It gives a work of art a touch of rap that ordinarily, reading a piece with rhyme seems like one is singing a song. Let's take this ride:

*Just like raindrops falling from my **eyes***

*Just like tears drops falling from the **skies;***

*It's like a blessing, a blessing in **disguise***

*But we fail to **realise***

*And I have to pay the **price.***

*Young man, be careful and think it **twice***

Before you choose to use your device. – TuFaceIdibia (“Rain Drops”)

The above parts of words painted red are observed to sound alike. Try saying those words and you’ll realise they are musical. That is what is called rhyme – the musical sameness or similarity in the way words sound when said. Below are some definitions of rhyme:

1. **similarity in sound:** a similarity in the sound of word endings, especially in poetry
2. **word sounding same as another:** a word with an ending that sounds similar to the ending of another word
3. **poem:** a poem, or poetry generally, of a light-hearted kind with a pattern of similar sounds at the ends of the lines

TYPES OF RHYME

- a. **Masculine Rhyme:** This is a situation when the words that are rhyming are stressed syllables i.e. when the parts that are sounding alike are the stressed syllables, then it is called MASCULINE RHYME. Consider:

In firm grips I felt a **cuddle**
To the ease, return a **fondle**

The parts of the words coloured red indicate the stressed syllables, hence where the masculine rhyme is achieved.

- b. **Feminine Rhyme:** Your guess is as good as mine; feminine rhyme is when the rhyme is achieved on the unstressed syllable as the part painted purple in the above lines.
- c. **Perfect Rhyme:** Please note that whether masculine or feminine, they are both examples of perfect rhymes. Hence, what is a perfect rhyme? Take a look at the excerpt below:

*Two roads diverged in a yellow **wood**,
And sorry I could not travel **both**
And be one traveller, long I **stood**
And looked down one as far as I **could**
To where it bent in the **undergrowth**;* – Robert Frost (“The Road not Taken”)

The words “wood”, “stood” and “could” have similar sound, hence we say the lines rhyme, and being that no flaw is observed in the rhyme, such rhyme is called **PERFECT RHYME**. - When the sounds in the rhyming words are not just assumed to have rhymed but obviously do so.

- d. **Eye Rhyme:** This is also called imperfect rhyme. It is a situational rhyme, when a word rhymes with another word only in sight but not in sound. Most times, this rhyme is achieved by spelling not pronunciation of words. Consider the following lines:

*There's no height that I won't move
If the move shall win your love.*

The ‘ove’ ending the two words seems to tell of a rhyme, yes, to the eyes, not to the ears; when you pronounce the words, you get /mu:v/ and /l^v/...obviously, even to the deaf, the vowel sounds are different, hence the rhyme is imperfect.

- e. **End Rhyme:** All the above examples are examples of end rhyme because the place where the rhyming words are located is at the end of the lines of poetry; you see why it is called **END RHYME**? It is achieved at the end of lines.
- f. **Internal Rhyme:** If it's not end rhyme, then it is internal rhyme. Check this out:

*We were in our **clans**, eating our **barns***

*Where with **calm** we share our **yams***

You will agree with me that in line 1, ‘clans’ and ‘barns’ rhyme while in line 2, calm and yams do rhyme. Since the words aren't rhyming at the end like other experimented lines above, but seeing the words that are rhyming are in the same line, it is called **INTERNAL RHYME**. However, note that the rhyme could be internal as seen below:

*When it **rains**, man **winces***

*Like in **chains**, he **groans**...*

B R E A K T I M E !

WARNING: Don't in the chase of rhyme lost your message.

Let's continue on sammiegodson@gmail.com or WhatsApp on +2347030226416 -
Your feedback is important. Thank you!

Men, Internet Porn and Video Games

by YakekponoAbasi Adams

You probably know this guy. He spends hours playing video games and watching pornography. Are you his lover? Forget sex, no dosage you administer is ever enough. Studies show that porn and gaming can become compulsive and addicting. In their book, *The Demise of Guys: Why Boys Are Struggling and What We Can Do About It*, psychologists Philip Zimbardo and Nikita Duncan say we may lose an entire generation of men to pornography and video-gaming addictions. Lose an entire generation of men? Ladies, who will save us from men scarcity? *"Pornography promises orgasm without intimacy. Video warfare promises adrenaline without danger."* Chai, men; y'all complain of fake boobs, yet love fake love? Somebody hold me, please.

Honesty ,I could care less about a man leaving behind a lively, throbbing, warm, tight and wet something for a fake, lifeless something. I'm not even interested in how many times he sticks his something into the fake something, but it becomes a matter of concern when you leave your partner unsatisfied. Most times, the man even puts the woman aside and goes after pornography idols. When playing video games, we are

left unattended to, poor us! It seems both porn and video games are meant to simulate something - something for which men long for; dear men, kindly let us know, because the arousal that makes these so attractive is ultimate to the core.

According to researchers, these addictions foster the seemingly opposite vices of passivity and hyper-aggression. The porn addict becomes a lecherous loser, with one-flesh union supplanted by masturbatory isolation. The video-game addict becomes a pugilistic coward, with other-protecting courage supplanted by aggression with no chance of losing one's life. In both cases, one seeks the sensation of being a real lover or a real fighter, but by venting one's reproductive or adrenal glands over pixilated images, not flesh and blood for which one is responsible.

“A man who learns to be a lover through porn will simultaneously love everyone and no one.”

Zimbardo and Duncan are right: this is a generation mired in fake love and fake war, and that is dangerous. A man who learns to be a lover through porn will simultaneously love everyone and no one. A man obsessed with violent gaming can learn to fight everyone and no one. The answer to both addictions is for our men to stick to making love and war... for real.

time cycle of deeds

Phoenix

As the subject in any life dealing, whatever you do will happen to you and as the object whatever happened to you shall return to the doer. This piece is dedicated to those in doubt of the certainty in the above assertion. I still find it difficult to ascertain which part of the law of karma humans don't understand, in fact, it is as simple as what goes around comes around, isn't it? Unless your location is not on planet Earth, you must find few examples around you to prove karma right, why then do you intend to put out the light that will make the future brighter than the sun.

You don't have to concoct someone's sack letter before you rise through the cadre at work, if you do so, somebody will of course use you as the main ingredient in such delicacy sooner or later. Shout out to 'Yahoo boys' out there, well done! You guys are even smarter than Oyinbo people but *thou shalt vomit all currencies swallowed because what man didn't labor for shan't linger in his custody.*

My people used to say "if a fellow betrays under cover, evil befalls him in secret". In life, every act is a strong stain on the actor which can only be cleansed when it reflects to him with full force. I call it '*time cycle of deeds*' but popular as 'karma' and it is that in which all that emanated from you shall be returned to you here or in the hereafter. It will follow you, believing it or not is your choice to make but it shall follow you to the seven heavens and the seven hells so if it is evil don't do it! Not in the name of wealth, not in the name of anything.

Hold on to thine faith
for the creator hath decreed
upon thou bountiful prosperity
to be revealed by fate in time.

DAUDA ONAWOLA



"Hold on to thine faith for the creator hath decreed upon thou bountiful prosperity to be revealed by fate in time" - Dauda Onawola

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writelife4.blogspot.com

DAUDA ONAWOLA was born in a Yoruba speaking community in South Western Nigeria. He is the sole admin of Wonder Nation Poetry. He writes to encourage positivity in the human society at large (peaceful co-existence and benign mind set towards others). He also writes on the differences between the ancient societies and the modern world, hope for the ill-born and his ambient situation. He also has a deep affection for strange/weird natural things or events.

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Ahmad Gbolahan Ahmad



Word Wizardry Contest is a bi-monthly poetry contest on Whatsapp. The concept is driven at promoting the exhibition of poetry locally much as possible via the simple contest.

MODUS OPERANDI

The contest takes place twice a month and this is the layout;

in the first week, submissions would be received for 6days (Monday to Saturday) as direct message to the admin on WhatsApp (via +2348130555674) or Facebook (fb.com/onawoladauda) and on the 7th day (Sunday), the best 5 would be selected by the sole admin then floor would be opened for voting on the 8th day till the 12th day (Monday to Friday).

The winner would be announced on the 13th day (Saturday) and the winning piece shall be publicized. The 14th day is a break for members while the admin tries to source for another interesting topic/format of contest. As a reward, the winning piece gets published on Wonder Nation poetry blog, Youth Shades online

magazine and Wonder Nation facebook page. A winner is tagged 'Word Wizard' and winners in previous sessions shall then be called upon for a grand contest in the last month of the year for the tag 'WIZARD OF THE YEAR', this last contest in each year has monetary and/or material reward attached.

Recently, Word Wizardry Review was introduced in the group for peer review of poems sent to the admin with hash tag '#WWR'. The review session depends on the number of poems lined up for review at a time.

HOW TO JOIN

In order to maintain the integrity of the group, the invite link is never shared by the admin. To join WWC, all you need to do is send a message to the admin, DAUDA ONAWOLA on WhatsApp via +2348130555674 indicating your interest to join the WWC group, it doesn't need to be formal anyways, 'hello, add me to WWC' is enough.

Meet Ahmad Gbolahan Ahmad, two-time winner of WWC.

I'm the first child in a family of 4 and I'm the only boy. I hail from Kwara State, Nigeria and currently studying Veterinary Medicine at Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto. I love travelling, rapping songs and most importantly, football.

I started writing when I was in secondary school, it's been almost 11 yrs now. What made me to start writing was music. I love music so much especially rap. I do listen to the likes of Olamide and wish one day I can record my own track, so I began writing lyrics. Most poetry use a correlation of imaginary lines that rhyme with nature. I have not contested in any competition before, WWC is my first.

Writers are gifted individuals who visualize this world from a different dimension and put those visuals into written forms. I believe writers can make the world a better place

Words I live by: "To whom brain is given, sense is expected". I believe God almighty has given everyone a brain, so it's left for us to bring common sense out of it.

E-book is better for me. My phone is a big company of me so anytime I'm less busy, I can scroll through some pages.

I write for pleasure, but I'm a born hustler, so any where money comes from I work there. I need to struggle hard to keep my school hope alive.

Below are the poems that earned him the titles, *wizard of the shadows* and *wizard of order*, respectively.

“shadow on caves”

The form in which we live our lives
Breeds in the midst of demon hives.
For dogs do bark in senseless fright
At shadows lurking in the night,
And souls shiver at that unseen;
Cathartic reasons not to dream.
Voices whisper ideas, faux truths,
That knowledge has no valid use.
And when we hear, we do obey
The voice that blocks the light of day.
Lamplight dances against cave walls

And childlike wonder slowly falls.
Pavlov shakes his head in sadness,
For we, indeed, are his madness.
And Plato weeps within his cage
For all his truths leave him in rage.
Is all that we can ever see
Vague words that tell us not to be?

“my vision”

Where the mountains touch the sky,
Where poets dream, where eagles fly,
A secret place above the crowd,
Just beneath a silver-lined cloud.
Lift your eyes to a snowy peak,
And see the soon-to-be we seek.
Whisper dreams and let them rise,
To the mountains old and wise.
Climbers climb, it's time to try,
Where the mountains touch the sky.
Take me there. Oh take me now,
Someway, Someday, Somewhere, Somehow.
Where the ocean meets the sky,
Where mermaid dance, where seagulls fly,

A place in dreams I know so well,
The sea inside a single shell.
Far across the living sea,
A pale blue possibility,
Beyond the castles made of sand,
Tomorrow I say is in a small child's hand.

Buying A New Watch

By YakekponoAbasi Adams



It is unwise to purchase a non-branded watch. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly the quality of build is often considerably lower for a non-branded watch so you are unlikely to get the years of service that you should expect.

Secondly there are often issues with warranties when non-branded watches fail.

Another thing that you should always avoid is purchasing your watch from an unauthorized dealer.

If you buy a branded watch from an authorized dealer then you have made two of the best decisions that you can make when buying a watch.

Before you buy your watch you really need to think about the reason why you are buying the watch. Obviously a construction worker will need a different type of watch than the businessman who is looking for a watch to wear when he is attending business lunches.

There are watches designed for all applications, and these factors need to be considered before purchasing. Is the watch going to be for recreational purposes, casual, dress, sports, or active wear, or are you looking for a watch simply to make a statement?



With so many good brands of watch on the market, there is a lot to choose from and with prices ranging from relatively cheap to out of this world it is wise to explore all the options before parting with your money.

Don't just look at the brands that you are familiar with, as there are many excellent brands that might offer more features for your money.

A good watch dealer will be able to help you make a good decision by explaining the differences in the brands and tailoring your purchase to your requirements.

Many of the brands that have been respected for quality also offer cheaper quality watches so you can't assume that a watch is good just because of the brand name. Once again a good dealer will be able to help you decide. There are also a few good watch forums on the internet where people will share their opinions and experiences.

Do not be too concerned with the technical details when buying a watch as most quality watches have the same basic functions. It shouldn't matter to you whether the watch is a quartz, a certified mechanical (chronometer), or a non-certified mechanical, provided it is capable of keeping time with accuracy and maintain that accuracy for many years.



Most expensive watches are mass-produced to a very high level of quality thanks to modern techniques so it is unlikely that you will be buying a watch that has been handmade by craftsmen who have had generations in the trade.

While price is one consideration that needs to be taken into account when making your purchase, it is more important that you get exactly what is needed for your requirements even if that involves paying a little more money for your purchase.

If you choose wisely, a watch can last a lifetime with good care.



Health Tips with Dr. Frank

4 Simple Reasons Why You Wake Up With a Headache

"I keep waking up with a headache!"

Do you find yourself in this situation most times? Then you are not alone.

But what causes it? These are just four reasons why that could happen to you.

1. **Poor sleep quality:** For starters, poor sleep quality can lead to a headache the next day. So the first thing to do is investigate what, if anything is interfering with your sleep. One common culprit is *sleep apnea*, a condition in which you periodically stop breathing throughout the night. Your body then wakes you up so you'll start breathing again. You may not even realize that this is happening. Ask your partner or a friend whether you're a loud snorer—that's often a tip-off. You need to report this to your doctor.

Teeth grinding overnight can cause soreness in the jaw muscles or temporomandibular joint (or TMJ, which is also the commonly used name for the jaw disorder that sometimes involves grinding). That achiness can lead to a headache. Again, you may not realize that you're grinding your teeth, but your dentist should be able to detect the problem if it's there.

2. It could also have to do with allergens. Exposure to dust mites Exposure to dust mites while you sleep can also leave you waking up with an aching head, due to the sinus congestion it causes. If you suffer from allergies, try using allergy proof bedding—special pillowcases, mattress covers and duvets designed to protect you from exposure to mites—and washing your sheets more frequently.

3. **Hypoglycemia.** An unusually low blood sugar levels in the morning could give you headache. Make sure you eat well at night to prevent this from happening.

4. Consumption of certain foods like overnight alcohol consumption could lead to dehydration, which eventually causes headache; excessive drinking of caffeinated beverages at night could also cause headache in the morning.

You need to see a doctor if symptoms persist despite change in your daily schedule and prevention of triggers. You should also see a doctor if it persists despite treatment for malaria or if this is the first time you are having a headache this severe.

Dr. Frank, Edidiong is a connectrovert and a certified medical practitioner with a track record in research and online medical education. A graduate of University of Uyo Medical School, he is currently working on a research linking social media and sleep disturbances.



Enough of the Regrets of Youthfulness! Open a New Page

Take it or leave it, life is not just an entity. It is rather fashioned after the designs of a cobweb. It has a lot of sides, nuances and explanations to one's existence. To stress it a bit further, life is a struggle. Life is an experience. Life, ultimately, suggests fulfillment. All these suggestions ought to be realised within the gamut of one's lifetime.

Therefore, existence presupposes living unto fulfillment. No wonder, one author summarizes that 'Life is all about broken pieces of time'. Time too is measurable, adjustable and challenging. For instance, a geography student would readily educate a lay person on how varied types of natural water bodies (lakes, lagoons, streams, creeks, rivers, seas and oceans) behave. Each of the lesser water bodies would empty their entities into a bigger one and finally the ocean would turned out to be the overall septic tank for all other water bodies available. In the same vein, seconds are emptied into minutes; minutes pulsate to produce hours; hours in turn graduate into days ; couples of days multiple into weeks ; weeks turn months; months give birth to years. Years now count in decades, scores, anniversaries of silver, golden, diamond, centenary, thousands, millennial, and to infinituum, are celebrated by humankind in one's life time. Notably, there has being no human who had ever existed that have lived a life of utter impeccability.

No one's life path could be traced without cracks and breakages come what the age one attained at any given time or place. Because the concept of mortality cannot exist on its own outside human existence, that means humans are always mere mortals, they are not angels or perfect beings. They are bound to fail in life in their own lifetime. Mistakes are bound to appear. Mistakes could be of categories. We may have Premeditated/Deliberate or Silly mistakes. Both kinds do happen. But the former do happen in order to disorganise or frustrate another person(s) designs. Mind you, even silly mistakes could be committed by anyone else.

Mistakes later discovered could be painful or turned into hurtful memories. Mistakes could be subjugated under scrutiny and turned out to be a positive construing tool achieving milestones unto the futurity. That is, mistakes of whatsoever kind made and discovered could be reflected upon; and used as stepping stones for achieving improved moments of life; and as finished products used for striking at higher strides in our various walks of life. Mistakes per se are irreversible but could be considered, envisioned and renewed. We don't to cry over already spilt milk. The deed is already done. The past is gone. Naturally, Yesterday was there in order to conceive Today so that Tomorrow would come to the bare.

So, you this young guy; boy or girl; a teen; a student or school dropout; undergraduate or graduate; job seeker or employee; now pick up your pen as well as a new exercise book. Open a new and a blank page for yourself. Now, begin to

reconstruct, rewrite, all the details of your yesterday; strategize your new plans; be refocused and commit all your ways to the Lord. And at same time, do not dissuade yourself from his unfailing trust ; because, he so much believe in you. So, you too cling to his breast since he so much believe in you. After all, regret presupposes stagnancy, dormancy and hopelessness. I don't think any enviable, viable and vibrant youth who is a right thinking fellow who'll like to associate along side with mediocrity, sobbing and unfruitfulness. Note, regrets are to be replaced with hopes.

I guessed young people who had had once caught up within the circle of regrets or calamities could be helped out strictly by means of good counseling, prayer and good morale of friendship. Before I cap the crown, let me share a living testimony about a female friend of mine, who had been victimized by the blows of failures, regrets and sadness with you: I had this good friend sometime 8 years ago. She was a student of a certain Nigerian university. She read Economics. When she got to the final year in her studies. She could not make it to graduation successfully. Hence, she was considered for an extension programme. Without mincing words, she was dispirited, saddened and worn out. Ready to give a quit to education on a final note. I now summoned her; spoke to her senses; and made her felt belonging once again to the academic environment. With much more prayers and counseling sessions, on several occasions, I must ensure that she prayed some salient Psalms at night for that purpose. After a while, she was buoyed with much hopes. She paid for her extension fees; prepared for the exams, and at last graduated. Afterwards, she served the nation under the scheme of NYSC. Today, she is working in one Maritime School of Technology within the country; receiving a fat salary; and happily married with two kids. Praise the Lord! Alleluia!!

(C) Rev. Fr. Peter Lucky Brakaebi

Rev. Fr. Peter Lucky Brakaebi, a Catholic priest of the diocese of Bomadi in Delta State of Nigeria. I finished from a renowned Seminary of SS. Peter Paul, Bodija, Ibadan, Oyo State; ordained a priest 2012. I hail from Torugbene town, Burutu

LGA, Delta State. I am an Izon(Ijaw) by ethnicity. Born 3rd March 1977. Currently, I am serving as a parish priest in St Paul Catholic Parish, Ekeremor, Bayelsa State.

What Went Wrong? When Relationships Go Bad...

by **YakekponoAbasi Adams**

How are you going to admit this to people? Your perfect relationship, the one that was destined to last forever ... it's over. What went wrong? How could you have let something so wonderful just slip through your fingers without even realizing it? The truth is relationships fail for all sorts of reasons. *However, there are a top few that tend to permeate stories of love gone wrong:*

Money

It's been said over and over again – "money is the root of all evil." Whether or not that is entirely true, it is indeed at the root of many relationship problems. Both partners need to be on the same page as far as money is concerned. Issues can arise

when one person is a saver and the other is a spender. Any major purchases should be discussed and agreed upon prior to buying. Even daily expenditures can become a problem. Be sure you both understand where the money is coming from in your relationship and where it will go.

Communication

At the heart of money and all other issues is generally a lack of communication. Some couples don't talk about things that bother them. Others talk, but their conversations tend to deteriorate into arguments. Another group tends to assume their partners can read their minds and should know what is at the heart of any problem. Obviously, this isn't the case. Putting the time and the effort into reaching a level of communication that involves equal parts speaking and listening, as well as a healthy dose of understanding and a heavy coating of thick skin can go a long way towards keeping a relationship happy.

Selfishness

Just talking about a problem isn't enough. Every problem needs a resolution. Even the best communicators can fail at this point. If either side (or worse, both sides) refuse to budge, all the talking in the world won't fix things. Relationships require compromise and a lot of it. Even if a couple is perfectly in synch on every issue for a long time, eventually they will run across something they don't see eye to eye on. This is where compromise becomes necessary. Both people need to be willing to give a little so they can reach a decision they are both able to live with.

Family

While it is wonderful to paint a picture of your relationship as existing in its own little bubble, both people involved have families who were with them long before they met each other and will likely stick around for the remainder of their lives. The importance of this group of people cannot be ignored. They can be friends, confidantes, or even the measure against which your relationship is compared.

Remember the old saying— "*you don't just marry the person, you marry the family.*" Do not dismiss their family as unimportant. Do not try to break the bonds that exist between them. Instead, try to form your own bonds with the other person's family. If that isn't possible, at least try to keep your feelings about them from destroying the relationship you hold dear. There are certainly other problems that can affect and destroy relationships, but the above four are often at the heart of the issue. If those are kept in check, everything else can be dealt with as it comes along, and your relationship is likely to last as long as you want it to.

YakekponoAbasi Adams is haunted by the words she does not write, and writing is the other thing that keeps her sane. Fondly known as *Yakky*, she watches serial movies when she is not airing on **Youth Shades TV**.

VALLEY OF ANGELS



Twenty years ago.....

‘you’re good for nothing....just look at you’ her mother thundered....she was constantly embarrassed and disappointed because of the only daughter she had.

Diana felt hurt by her mother’s harsh words and immediately left for her room... yes, she knew she had a weight problem but that didn’t mean she had to starve...

‘don’t you dare walk out on me’ the woman followed aggressively... Diana was everything of a daughter she never wanted... she was slow, dumb and very fat...at sixteen she had the hips of a mother of five. She wasn’t pleased

She shut the door behind her, tears flowed uncontrollably down her cheeks....nobody knew what she went through every day in this house....nobody understood her humiliation...and what was worse, her father was late and they lived with an Uncle....who was very accommodating but nobody knew what he did to her every night....

It started when she was ten....her mother usually left her behind, too ashamed to take her outsideonly her brother, Omale, had that privilege.

The first day, she had sobbed quietly in her room after her mother’s rejection, Uncle Oche had found her alone....his wife and children all went out...He offered to give her some snacks and took her to his room.... He gave her the snacks alright...then he began removing his clothes...she was startled...Innocent as she was, she didn’t understand what caused him to remove his clothes.... Then he walked closer to her and began to touch her....

‘uncle stop it...I don’t like what you are doing’ she began to sob...But he lifted her plump body and dropped her on the bed, then he undressed her quickly and rubbed his shaft against her... She screamed...she sobbed bitterly but nobody could hear her....she was all alone...

On their return, she quickly showed her mother her reddened and bleeding vulva ...she was amazed at her mother’s reaction...

‘you foolish girl, why do you always land yourself in trouble’? she snapped....

‘mommy Uncle Oche did it to me’ she cried....

‘shut your mouth, do you hear me?... tell nobody about this...never ...now go and have your bath’ she thundered...

She was so confused, she still was...what kind of mother would do that to her only daughter?

Now she was sixteen and he still came for her...sometimes she fought him off, other times he succeeded.... She was depressed most of the time but no one noticed...even if they did, they didn't care...

In school, she had no friends... she wasn't classy enough to mix with the rich kids, she wasn't brilliant enough to join the bright ones and she was too fat to hang out with the beauty queens... nobody liked her, even Omale, her brother, was ashamed of her.

'open this door...you fool' her mother banged heavily on the door....

'stay away from me' Diana found her voice... she saw his face.... The only one that made her happy... carefully, she locked the door and climbed the bed...

'Chimobi' she touched the picture gently.... He was two years ahead of her in class as she'd repeated a few times, in age, he was above her by two years....

Chimobi was the most handsome student in the entire school.... he was tall and dark... his chest was broad and his stomach was flat and well muscled... his nose was well chiseledhis lips were slightly full but well shaped and his eyes were dark and seducing...

It wasn't only about his looks... he was very intelligent and had won many awards for the school and he was from a very wealthy family...so he was an idol to many especially the female folks...

She smiled as her fantasies blossomed again... she imagined going on a date with him...she saw his attractive eyes staring deeply into hers...It was only in her daydreams that could happen.... Chimobi didn't even know her name apart from the degrading nicks she was given by the mean girls in her class... 'porkmeat'...

He had never spoken a word to her before...she only saw him at close range when he came to address her class or whenever Omale sent for her...he was Chimobi's classmate.

She secretly envied his beautiful friend... 'Sexy' was her nicks...she was very attractive just like him...Seyi was tall and slim...a lightskinned beauty with full breasts. But she was nothing compared to Sexy... she was fat and undesirable...

It was that time of the year in school, where the boys betted.... They would write the names of all the girls in senior classes and drop them in a jar.

One of them would shuffle it...while the rest would pick the names then the betting would ensue...

‘I picked your sister’ Chimobi sighed disappointed in his ‘choice’...

‘wow make sure you ride well...you know she’s so wide down there’ he teased and the boys broke wild with laughter....

‘how could you even say something like that about your sister’ Chimobi was surprised... yes, the girl had weight issues...it was very obvious but he didn’t believe in disrespecting women, his parents had brought him up well.

‘see this player...you better shut up...’ Omale’s temper began to rise... why would Chimobi talk to him like that?

‘guys stay calm...what’s important...is if this girl agrees to go down with him’...one of the boys chipped in...

‘yes...I know my sister well...you don’t need to waste your time...she’s as cheap as they come’ Omale continued...

‘you are pathetic’ Chimobi hissed angrily and left the gathering for his chase...

He didn’t know why he was doing this...but it was a school tradition... his girlfriend couldn’t find out else she’d break up with him and that would hurt him badly as he was deeply in love with her.

Seyi was not just very pretty... she was intelligent and cared as well for him but she was haughty... he’d slept with many girls without her finding out... he just prayed this went out well.

She took time and brushed her long hair...it was the only accessory of beauty god had blessed her with... she had a dream the previous night, she saw herself in a field of roses and butterflies danced eagerly around her...She felt happy for no reason... today was just a beautiful day and she vowed that nobody would spoil it for her not even her mother...

‘Goodmorning’ she greeted ...

‘goodmorning’ her mother replied...

‘where are you off too’ she spoke in that commanding tone...

‘school of course’ Diana replied...

‘but you haven’t taken your breakfast’...

This was really a good day, what was her mother up to?

‘thank you ...am not hungry today’ she responded and made for the door but her uncle’s voice stopped her...the evil man that molested her ...

She had killed him many times in her heart...she had already made up her mind to run as far as possible once she was done with her Senior Secondary exams...

‘come back home early...there’s a man I want you to meet’ he cleared his throat and positioned himself by the table...She didn’t utter any word...she just left... something wasn’t right...

‘don’t you think she’s too young to marry that old chief’? Oche asked his sister...

‘but she’s not too old for your bed’ the woman was bitter about many things but her hands were tied...

To be continued in our next issue.

Rose Akpabio is a poet and fiction story writer who hails from Essien Udim in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. She has a B.Sc Sociology from the University of Uyo.

Rose started writing in college and has written over 30 fiction novels till date. Most of her works are published on the Davina Diaries blog (www.davinadiaries.com).

She hopes to bring light to world through her writings; and when she is not writing, she loves to read novels, watch movies, take pictures and listen to good music.

Other titles by this author include *Whom the Gods Have Blessed; Love, Lies and Divorce; Dayo's Angel; Amazing Grace; Second Chances; and The Oluwatosin Trilogy*.



Kolawole's Write-Ups

QUOTES:

- Frustration can only turn people from you, create hatred, call for revenge and initiate war. Try listening and all that you want will be achieved.

- When your plan failed you, do not fail but continue planning. One day you shall achieve your plan.
- Not the quantity of books you read will expand and originate your thinking but the experience you had gathered from them.

“PEACE; THOU HATH GONE FAR”

Since the antecedent of man thou peace has be
Togetherness we were like mother and son
You gave, we took and lived like bee
But ungrateful we are and leave you like nun
Indeed, you weight above thinkable ton.

Out of a sudden, you leave our room
Not only but also the path of others.
Is it our sins that sound always boom
Or restless of our tongue that split the orders?
The laws of peace laid by the elders.

Can we really say the cause are the blood?
The blood of the sackless and sweat of the poor
Pensions of the pensioners and effect of their mud
Revenge of the infants who live in poore
And see their drivers in jeeps and lovers for voyeur.

By heaven, we wring our garment from unpick tears

The news of the day are the roasted heads

The symbols of fear are the monk bears

Pray you back peace to unite our hands

Before the flute is piped and teds are sleds.

® AYUBA MUHYIDEEN KOLAWOLE

I am Ayuba Muhyideen kolawole, the eyes of mother and mirror of father. A lover of writing, speaking and teaching to no extent. I was born in Kwara State, Ilorin and presently a student of English Language at Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.



Compiled by **YakekponoAbasi Adams**

FACTS

- Mosquitoes have killed more humans than all the wars in history.
- A cockroach will live nine days without its head before it starves to death.
- Silent and "Listen" are spelled with the same letters.

- On Mars, sunsets are blue.
- Earth has lost 50% of its wildlife in the past 40 years.
- Bill Gates bought ‘Codex Leicester’, one of Leonardo Di Vinci’s scientific journals for \$30.8 million.
- ‘*A la recherche du temps perdu*’ by Marcel Proust is the longest book in the world at 9,609,000 characters. Translated into Remembers of Things Past, the book tells the story of the narrator’s experiences growing up.
- Roald Dahl served in the Royal Air Force during World War II and also tested chocolates for Cadbury’s while he was at school. (I guess we know where his inspiration for Charlie and the Chocolate Factory came from).

PHOBIAS

- Arachnophobia – The fear of spiders, affects women four times more than men.
- Ophidiophobia – The fear of snakes.
- Acrophobia – The fear of heights.
- Agoraphobia – The fear of open or crowded spaces.
- Cynophobia – The fear of dogs. This includes everything from small Poodles to large Great Danes.
- Astraphobia – The fear of thunder/lightning AKA Brontophobia, Tonitrophobia, Ceraunophobia.
- Claustrophobia – The fear of small spaces like elevators, small rooms and other enclosed spaces.
- Mysophobia – The fear of germs. It is also rightly termed as Germophobia or Bacteriophobia.

BRAIN TEASERS (find answers below)

1. Who is bigger: Mr. Bigger, Mrs. Bigger, or their baby?
2. Mike is a butcher. He is 5’10” tall. What does he weigh?
3. A farmer has 17 sheep and all but nine die. How many are left?
4. How far can a rabbit run into the woods?
5. In a year, there are 12 months. Seven months have 31 days. How many months have 28 days?
6. I do not have any special powers, but I can predict the score of any football game before it begins. How can I do this?

7. You are driving a bus. At the first stop, two women get on. The second stop, three men get on and one woman gets off. At the third stop, three kids and their mom get on, and a man gets off. The bus is grey, and it is raining outside. What color is the bus driver's hair?

Answers

1. The baby, because he is a little bigger.
2. Meat
3. Nine
4. Halfway. After that, he is running out of the woods.
5. They all do.
6. Well, the score before any football game is always zero to zero!
7. Whatever color your hair is! Remember, you are the bus driver!

WRITERS WANTED

Can you write an article once a month in the following niches?

- Legal
- Culture
- Beauty
- Food and drinks
- Arts
- History
- Travel

- Family
- Men
- Women
- Environment

Email us via info@youthshades.com if you answered YES